

Sermon for Mid-week Lent 6

Date: March 25, 2026

Location: Zion – Colby, WI

Old Testament: Lamentations 3:22–33

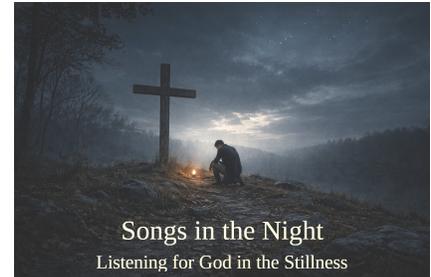
Epistle Reading: Romans 8:18–25

Gospel Reading: Matthew 26:36–46

Sermon Series: Songs in the Night

Sermon Title: The Night Before the Dawn

Sermon Text: Psalm 22



Hymns:

LSB 435 – Come to Calvary’s Holy Mountain (v.1,3)

LSB 439 – O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken (v. 11)

LSB 688 – Come Follow Me the Savior Spake (v.1-2)

LSB 421 – Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing (v.1,4)

Distribution:

LSB 707 – Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices

LSB 430 – My Song Is Love Unknown

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316-Sermons by Phone:
715-316-4098

(No Internet or Smart Phone needed)



Text: Psalm 22

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words
of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.

In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.

To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.

All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;

“He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!”

Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother’s breasts.

On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother’s womb you have been my God.

Be not far from me,
for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.

Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—
I can count all my bones—

they stare and gloat over me;
they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.

But you, O LORD, do not be far off!

O you my help, come quickly to my aid!
Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!

Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!

I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

You who fear the LORD, praise him!

All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.

The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.

For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the
dust,

even the one who could not keep himself alive.
Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming
generation;

they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a
people yet unborn,
that he has finished it.

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Grace and peace. Amen.

Introduction – Remembering Where We Are

We are nearing the end of the night. For several weeks now, Lent has taught us how to pray when words fail, how to wait when God feels distant, how to sing quietly when the darkness lingers. Each step has named a different shade of night: silence, delay, sorrow, endurance. Tonight, we stand close to the morning.

Not in the light yet. Not even at sunrise. We stand in that last heavy blue-hour¹ when the darkness feels thickest, when waiting grows a bit too long, when hope has to be carried rather than felt.

Scripture gives words to this moment:

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in His word I hope;
my soul waits for the LORD
more than watchmen for the morning.²



I. The Long Night of Waiting

Waiting wears on people. Waiting tests patience. Waiting tests endurance. Waiting exposes what we cling to when relief doesn't arrive on our schedule.

Israel waited four centuries for deliverance from Egypt. This psalmists cried out again and again, asking how long the darkness will last. Even faithful hearts grow tired when prayers echo without answers.

God's word reminds us:

The Lord will not cast off forever, but, though He cause grief, He will have compassion according to the abundance of His steadfast love.³

The night feels long because it is long. The danger of a long night lies this: impatience creeps in. Faith begins to bargain. Hope becomes more fragile. The heart starts looking for shortcuts out of the darkness. We want dawn on demand. We want clarity without waiting for an answer.

II. Christ Waiting in the Night

Into this very long night steps Jesus. He does not stand outside it, or above it, calling instructions to us from a distance. He walks right in with us. On the Maundy Thursday night before His suffering, Jesus waits. In the garden, in prayer. Obedience overpowers comfort. The

1 The blue hour is a short period of twilight just before sunrise or just after sunset when the sun is below the horizon and the sky takes on a deep, rich blue color.

2 Psalm 130:5–6

3 Lamentations 3:31–32

Father's will stands. even while the path forward becomes heavier and darker. You hear the depth of it when the very Son of God prays:



My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.⁴

Jesus knows what's coming. He knows the silence of Good Friday afternoon is coming. He knows the sealed cold stone of Holy Saturday is coming. He knows Death's grip will claw at Him and sink its nails deep into Him. Still, He waits. Still, He puts His trust in God our Heavenly Father.

The Bible explains this time:

Although He was a son, He learned obedience through what He suffered.⁵

It is here there is a sliver, a glimmer of light that begins to shine, even before dawn breaks. Jesus' waiting is not weakness. It is resolute and steadfast faithfulness. His obedience carries weight we cannot bear. His prayer holds fast where ours would falter.

III. Waiting With a Certain Morning

The darkest part of the night lies just before the dawn. Though it feels endless it is not without promise. The Bible says:

We were saved in hope. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.⁶

Jesus' waiting shows us there is a guarantee of the morning to come. Resurrection does not erase the night; it follows it. It defeats it. The grave does not have the final word. The grave stands as the last obstacle before life and light are revealed. The promise of Easter doesn't rush ahead of Good Friday. It stands quietly beyond it.

This is where the Gospel settles into our waiting hearts. Jesus has gone through the longest night. Because He lives, dawn is certain, even when unseen.

Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.⁷



4 Matthew 26:39
5 Hebrews 5:8
6 Romans 8:24-25
7 Psalm 30:5

Conclusion – Standing on the Edge of Morning

Tonight, Lent leaves us here.

Not yet in full light, but not in despair. We are standing on the edge of promise. Jesus waits with us. Christ prays for us. He carries us through the night. The truth is the heaviest hours remain ahead.

Next time we will follow Jesus into the hours of betrayal, trial, cross, and tomb, where silence deepens deafeningly and hope hangs by faith alone.

Yet even there, the dawn is already promised.

Amen.



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